

VZCZCXRO5176
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHKUK RUEHROV
DE RUEHMS #0264 0981258
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 071258Z APR 08
FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9459
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 000264

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/07/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#) [MU](#)
SUBJECT: OMAN ACKNOWLEDGES NEED FOR INCREASED ENGAGEMENT
WITH IRAQ

REF: A. STATE 35473
[1](#)B. STATE 35471

Classified By: Ambassador Gary A. Grappo for Reasons 1.4 (b, d)

[1](#)1. (C) Ambassador delivered ref A and B demarches on April 6 to Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs Yusef bin Alawi. Regarding inaction on Iraq at the recent Arab League summit in Damascus, bin Alawi cast some of the blame on the Iraqi delegation, asserting that Iraqi Vice President Adel Abdel Mahdi had raised the situation in Iraq as one of the last items of business near the conclusion of the meeting when "everyone wanted to go home." Bin Alawi acknowledged, however, that Oman was "not doing enough" in its relations with Iraq. In response to the Ambassador's encouragement of high-level exchanges, the minister stated that he was still considering a visit to Baghdad or issuing an invitation for senior Iraqis to come to Muscat. He added that Oman was not ready to re-open its diplomatic mission in the Iraqi capital.

[1](#)2. (C) While recognizing the need for further Omani engagement with Baghdad, bin Alawi commented that the Iraqis were doing a poor job in communicating with Oman. He recounted that Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki had called Sultan Qaboos in June 2007 following hurricane Gonu to express his support for Oman and that the Sultan had genuinely appreciated the gesture. "More of this would help," noted bin Alawi.

[1](#)3. (C) With respect to public statements in support of the Iraqi government, bin Alawi said that Oman could issue these only in response to an appropriate event. As there was no such event at present, Oman would look for future opportunities to publicly voice support for Iraq.
GRAPPO